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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Arctic Sea Ice at Maximum Extent

03APR2020, Suitland, MD — The U.S. National Ice Center has determined that the 2020 maximum Arctic sea ice extent occurred on 03 March and marked the seventh lowest maximum ice extent.

The Interactive Multi-Sensor Snow and Ice Mapping System (IMS) desk used a threshold of 40% ice coverage at 4 km resolution in its trend analysis (i.e. a grid cell with ice concentration greater than 40% is considered ice covered). This year's analysis indicated a maximum 3-day average of 15.10 million square kilometers recorded on 02 March through 03 March. USNIC uses this 3-day running mean to calculate ice extent, a method used to reduce subjectivity and variability in the determination of ice extent while providing a clear trend line. This year's maximum is the seventh lowest recorded since the 4 km analysis began in 2004, and is approximately 200,000 square kilometers more than last year.



Figure 1: IMS Sea Ice Extent 02-04 March 2020

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The U.S. National Ice Center is a tri-agency center operated by the Navy, NOAA, and Coast Guard and provides global to tactical scale ice and snow products, ice forecasting, and related environmental intelligence services for the United States government.